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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses ways to make social work education more appropriate for the preparation of development practitioners to work with the people and communities of Appalachia. The current dominant theory developed by economists of Appalachian development is that of modernization. The theory emphasizes economic growth. Modernization sees society as progressing via industrialization, causing high rural to-urban migration. Acceptance of this theory, a world view that fails to take Appalachian culture into consideration, puts social work planners in a role that supports the economic system, limiting them to "cleaning up the casualties of economic activity." The theory also discourages adequate funding of social programs and robs social workers of the opportunity to improve the lives of their clients in a significant manner. Movement toward a new approach to development could open the doors for both a more appropriate development and more effective social work. An alternative model (McNutt 1987) includes: a reorientation of development goals away from economic growth and toward social objectives; a change in the measurement of growth to reflect those goals; a community level planning strategy; support for planning strategy at higher levels of analysis; technical support that relies on the talents and abilities of community people; and a structure for ensuring fulfillment of basic needs. Appropriate changes in social work education are needed and will require changes in perspective, an understanding of the region and its people, the acquisition of new skills, and better field education. 37 references. (TES)

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TRAINING PRACTITIONERS FOR APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN APPALACHIAN COMMUNITIES: A VIEW FROM SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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There has been much debate over the successes and failures of various Appalachian development programs. While it is true that the region has progressed, there are still many problems that must be dealt with. Many Appalachian communities lack adequate education, decent health care, a reasonable housing stock and a stable economic base. Human services programs remain underdeveloped in many areas. There is clearly much left to do.

At the same time, much of the successes of development activities have come at considerable human cost. Environmental destruction remains a side effect of industrial progress (Caudill, 1971). Whisnant (1980) calls attention to programs that he calls "culturally destructive". The loss of land, autonomy and power are all, in part, consequences of development efforts. These failures can be seen as consequences of the intervention technologies used in Appalachian development efforts. While development practitioners come from many fields, they employ similar intervention technologies. These intervention systems are said to be value-free, while in fact, they rest on development theory that employs values that are, in many important ways, inappropriate for planning with Appalachian communities. The result is programs that do not meet the needs of the region's people and that can have serious side effects. In order to break this cycle we must reorient professional practice. The most efficient way to accomplish this is to change professional education to teach intervention methods that are more appropriate for work with Appalachian communities.

Social work is one of the professions that prepare planners and community organizers to work with Appalachian communities. In many cases, mainstream social work education subscribes to a traditional development approach. This approach is often less than successful in dealing with the problems of mountain communities and hinders practitioners in their efforts to design interventions that might be more appropriate. It is also inconsistent with many of the values that social workers hold. In order to maximize the positive effects of social work planners and organizers, social work education must change the way it prepares people to work with Appalachian communities.

This paper will discuss ways of making social work education more appropriate for the preparation of development practitioners to work with the people and communities of the region. The dominant model of development and training for development will be presented and critically examined. The role of social work and social work education within this theory will be discussed. Next, a possibly more appropriate development strategy will be offered, and implications for social work and social work education will be identified. The final section will present a design for preparing social work practitioners to use the alternative model and design interventions in a culturally sensitive manner.

The Dominant Theory of Appalachian Development:

Many Appalachian development programs rely on variants of modernization theory for their theoretical and intellectual underpinnings. The Modernization approach was developed in the 1950's and early, 1960's to guide work with the third world through foreign assistance programs (Higgins and Higgins, 1979).

This is a approach to development that was largely developed by economists. Economic growth is the center of the process of development (Todero, 1985). The social, cultural, and political implications of the theory support the encouragement of economic growth. Some social institutions are seen as growth enhancing while others are seen as growth retarding. The latter are promoted and the former are destroyed (Galbraith, 1964). Development strategies have a strong urban bias and rural area are seen as backward. Part of the intervention process is promoting rural to urban migration. This can be seen quite vividly in the works of Arthur Lewis (1955) which stress the movement of the labor force from rural to urban areas. The ARC's "Growth Center" strategy may be said to have a similar intent. The aim of the growth center model, and the central place theory that supports it, is to move population and resources toward a "growth center" and away from a rural hinterland (Walls and Billings, 1977).

Modernization theory sees society as progressing through a series of steps or stages from a backward state to an industrial state (Rostow, 1960; Higgins and Higgins, 1979). All societies go through the same general phases and any problems are considered to be within the underdeveloped area.

Development is thought to be a value-free technical process that is guided by professional practitioners. Western industrial civilization is seen as unquestionably the best and ultimate development goal, and that these practitioners see such a goal as the proper outcome of the techniques that they employ. The idea that such assumptions are value judgements is not seriously considered. The failure to consider that value issue has lead to sharp criticism by both Third World Leaders and Western development theorists (Myrdal, 1968).

Poverty and other social problems are seen as the result of underdevelopment. Modernization approaches see economic growth as the cure for poverty using the "trickle-down" model of conservative economics. Social spending is seen as consumption that retards the growth process.

Present day social work in Appalachia reflects the assumptions of the dominant theory. Social work, within this context has a narrow residual or remedial orientation. Social programs are designed to support economic growth and provide for the few that cannot take advantage of the economy. Social work planners and community organizers are concerned with sectorial issues, such as placement of agencies and institutions and the development of remedial social casework programs. This is a direct services support model and does little to attack the base causes of social problems.

The acceptance of modernization theory puts social work planners and organizers in a role that supports the economic system, especially with regards to economic growth. The flow between social welfare and the economic system is almost entirely one way. Social work attempts help create

infrastructure that supports the economy. There is no attempt, however, to change the economy to facilitate social welfare concerns.

Modernization leads to a tendency toward failing to accept the uniqueness of the Appalachian subculture. Social program designs are considered to be "culture free", so there is no need to design programs that are more appropriate to Appalachia. The eventual outcome of this world view is that much of the social infrastructure that is developed will not be relevant to a significant portion of the people that social work planners are trying to help.

Social work education reinforces this situation by training social workers to practice within narrow sectorial bounds. It also teaches a "generic" system of practice that is thought to be value free and applicable in all situations.

This is clearly not a very acceptable role for those who are concerned about human welfare. It limits the social work development practitioner to a remedial role that deals with cleaning up the casualties of economic activity. What is needed is a broader, more comprehensive role within a more appropriate development model.

An Alternative Model of Appalachian Development:

Appalachia needs to look at development in a way that will focus on the potential of the people rather than the growth of the economy. In an earlier paper, I presented some ideas about what that approach to development might look like (McNutt, 1987).

This approach blends concepts from Sustainable Societies Approaches (Brown, 1981; Stokes, 1981), Basic Needs Development Strategies (Streeten, 1981), and the "Another Development" emphasis (Hettne, 1983) and adapts these strategies to Appalachia. It also uses material from more traditional development sources, such as Myrdal's (1968; 1974) institutional economic development theory and Lutz and Lux's (1979) Humanistic Economics. While the reader is referred to the original paper for a fuller treatment of the model, it will be summarized here.

The major components of this strategy are as follows: (1) a reorientation of development goals away from economic growth and toward social objectives such as quality of life and societal development, (2) a change in the measurement of growth to reflect the new goals, (3) a "bottom up" community-level planning strategy, (4) a policy framework to support the planning strategy at higher levels of analysis,(5) a structure for providing technical assistance and (6) a structure for ensuring the fulfillment of basic needs (McNutt, 1987).

This represents a reorientation from the traditional model of Appalachian development. No longer is economic growth the primary goal of the development process. Human development is more important than economic development. This change in goals will be reflected in a change in measurement. The use of economic indicators will no longer be adequate to address development. Social indicators must supplement the use of economic measures in assessing development outcomes (Seers, 1972).

An overall policy framework for the region is also proposed. This framework deals with overall issues such as ecological and resource management concerns, and supports the community-level activities. Key policies within this framework also insure technical assistance to local communities and provide basic needs fulfillment mechanisms. Stokes (1981) makes a compelling argument for this type of approach in sustainable development.

This strategy also employs participatory planning for small-scale community-level development programming. This type of programming is geared toward "self help" social and economic development programs that foster self reliant communities. This has become especially important in light of the problems of capital flight (Bluestone and Harrison, 1982).

The overall model reflects contemporary development thinking [outside of Appalachia] and the strategies have proved somewhat successful in the third world. In addition, from a moral or ethical viewpoint, there is much to be said for a model of development that puts human needs above economic growth. (Goulet, 1971).

The role of social work and social welfare was not well developed within the original formulation. A social welfare system that would work within this framework would be significantly different from what is presently operating in Appalachia.

The most important change would be a new perception of what the social welfare system can legitimately call its domain. The limited, residual view of the responsibilities of the social welfare system must be expanded.

Social welfare should be concerned with the quality of life and the creation of a just, fair and productive society. The social welfare system that exists in Appalachia is concerned with picking up the pieces of industrial society. Social welfare must concentrate on all of those areas that influence human welfare. This means an anticipatory stance and one that stresses prevention instead of simply cure. The social welfare system must be involved in the education system, the economic system, the political system and any other arena where the lives of people can be improved.

Social welfare services should be centered at the community level and community participation in the design, administration and evaluation of programs should be stressed. This should lead to programs that are more responsive to the community and its members.

If at all possible, financing should also be accomplished, at least in part, at the local level. Control of the funds would strengthen the program's accountability to the community and promote a sense of community ownership.

Income maintenance is a potential exception to this principle. Few Appalachian communities have the tax base to support major income maintenance programs. This is especially true in light of the high dependency ratio in many Appalachian communities and the attended high costs of providing income support for the elderly.

Income maintenance should be funded through a central regional structure aimed at meeting basic needs. This structure should be part of the overall policy framework.

Appropriate social services technology is another area that should be built into the region's social welfare system. In many cases, highly technological urban-designed social service delivery systems are employed in rural Appalachian communities with less than desirable consequences. Social services that perform in a manner that is appropriate for the community are needed. Appropriate social services technologies will operate in a manner that maximizes human welfare and is appropriate to the scale that community life in Appalachia presents. These technologies will rely on the talents and abilities of the mountain people and will rely only minimally on professionally trained staff.

Self help programs should be stressed (Stokes, 1981). Programs that allow people to help themselves aid in removing the stigma of welfare dependency and create new confidence and community solidarity. Self help groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Parents without Partners, TOPS, etc, not only provide useful instrumental services, they can also engage in social action. Bender (1986) finds self help groups useful in meeting the goals of social development. Community based self help organizations can provide their members will resources that the present social welfare system could not even pretend to provide.

Small, community oriented programs like health clinics, drop-in counseling centers, family day care networks and natural support networks are good possibilities for Appalachian communities. These programs should use prevention-oriented modalities keyed to the particular community. While many of these programs do exist in the mountains, there is a clear need to extend their availability to a broader range of the region's population.

There are many models that are used in third world nations that may be applicable to Appalachia. The Phillipines, for example, has a program that sets up poor families in their own businesses and provides technical support for their efforts (Reidy, 1981). While it is not at all clear how such a program might be implemented in the United States, the general approach could ease the problem of welfare stigma that plagues many of the region's poor. It could also provide a level of support that is not usually found in the public assistance programs in Appalachia.

Cooperative programs could also be useful in developing self-sufficiency for the region's poor. Cooperatives have a long history in Appalachia (Whisnant, 1980), but the results have been decidedly mixed. Appalachian cooperatives might stand a better chance if supported by a policy framework.

Appropriate social services technology will, of course, depend on the nature of the community of interest. Technologies that are appropriate for some communities will not work for others.

No social welfare system will be appropriate for Appalachian communities unless it is designed with an understanding of the culture and heritage of the region. The region has a unique history and has many values and beliefs that differ from other groups in American society. The social welfare system in Appalachia must be based on an understanding of the region.

Even in today's social welfare system, there is no excuse for a social worker to possess little or no background on the culture and history of the people that he or she works with. That would seem to be a basic prerequisite

of doing effective work. When one considers the intimate nature of worker-community interaction that this model requires, the need becomes all the more significant. Social workers who work in Appalachia clearly need to understand Appalachia.

These changes in the social welfare system in Appalachia will require that social workers adopt a different perspective on their practice. There will have to be a shift in orientation away from remedial/acute care practice models and toward preventive/developmental practice models. Social workers, in general, will have to become more skilled at working with the community.

Planners and community organizers will have to develop skills in setting up new types of community programs, building participation and designing systems that "work" with the Appalachian cultural system. While many social workers possess at least some of these abilities, additional skills may be needed. It is important to train a practitioner that can be effective in the Appalachian community.

Social work planners will also have to decide which technological skills are useful and which are not. This decision may not be an easy one, given the time and expense required to develop some of these skills. Some professional skills, however, exclude the community rather than encouraging its participation. In addition, some techniques have a clearly elitist character about them that does not contribute to the kinds of effects that are desired.

Social work education must respond to training practitioners to encourage a more appropriate development for Appalachia and it's social welfare system. The balance of this paper will suggest what social work education could do to produce practitioners for appropriate Appalachian development.

Social Work Education for Appalachian Development:

The present model of training social workers for planning and development roles in Appalachia is wedded to the traditional model of Appalachian development. A new social work supporting a new development model will require a new type of social work education. What that education might look like is presented in what is to follow.

A revised model of social work education will differ from traditional programs in terms of four basic dimensions. The first dimension is a change in perspective. Social work planners and community workers must use a broad perspective on the boundaries of social intervention. A sectorial perspective will not be as useful and will recreate the problems of the past.

The second dimension involves developing an effective understanding of the region and it's people. Appalachia is not the same as many other areas and should not be treated as such. Future planners and community workers will need this understanding for effective practice.

Third, new practice skills form the final dimension. Planners and community workers will need new skills in encouraging participation, developing programs, supporting self help efforts and working with the economic and political systems, as well as a host of related skills.

The final dimension is field education. This will involve taking the skills, perspective and, understanding of the region and applying them in actual field settings. These four dimensions form the core of a new social work education for Appalachia. A Change in Perspective: Most schools of social work present a view of social policy and the role of social workers that is slightly larger than the residual approach that is generally applied in American social welfare policy (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965). This approach is called the institutional approach and sees social welfare as an important institution that is engaged in functions that benefit everyone. While some appreciation is given to forces outside the social welfare system, the analysis is usually presented as sector specific.

A broader, and, perhaps more appropriate view is the social development perspective. This approach is defined by Hollister (1982: 32) as "... planned institutional change to bring about a better fit between human needs and social policies and programs." This approach sees social work as improving the quality of human existence at a variety of levels and with a variety of skills and techniques. Social Development tries to bring about "qualitative growth" in a society or region (Pavia, 1982). Because of the emphasis on development as opposed to growth, and on a broad rather than narrow scale of analysis, social development seems an appropriate model for social work education in Appalachia. Social development will lead to an international perspective on

Appalachia's problems Falk (1981) notes that an international view is a key component of the social development approach. A global view is essential when dealing with Appalachia's problems as a region.

A number of Appalachian development theorists have identified the links between the problems of the region and the nature of the world economy (Walls and Billings, 1977; Lewis and Horton, 1980). Even more mainstream theorists would have difficulty completely discounting the effects of the world economy on Appalachian economic growth. Planners must clearly understand the nature of the international forces that form part of the context for their practice, and a social development approach will give them the intellectual tools to integrate this information.

In sum, a social development approach to social work education, with it's concern for qualitative growth, human needs, and a broad global perspective on social issues, seems most appropriate for Appalachia. While this perspective is helpful, it is not completely adequate for the preparation of practitioners for Appalachia. They will also need an understanding of the nature of the region and the people. Toward An Understanding of Appalachia: Social work education is built on a foundation of knowledge about human behavior. This foundation includes content from a wide range of disciplines drawn together in an attempt to deal with the human condition in some type of holistic manner. While some of this content is useful to anyone who plans with people, there is also a need for specific information about Appalachia.

An essential starting point is the historical development of the region. Most critical is the effects of previous social change on the region (see Eller, 1982; Whisnant, 1980; Lewis, Kobak and Johnson, 1978). Planners must understand the route by which the region reached its present state in order to recommend the interventions that will be most beneficial in the future.

Following is an overview of the historical development of the region, content on the region's cultural, economic, social and political systems is in order. It is probably useful to begin at the abstract regional level and discuss the forces both by themselves and in relation to national and international institutions and forces.

Marcia Barron and I (McNutt and Barron, 1984) argued that the forces that engage the region converge at the level of the local community. Since much practitioner activity will concentrate at this level, it is essential that practitioners understand this vital unit. This should include discussion of Appalachian community theory and analysis of case studies, such as those by Hicks (1976) and Stephenson (1969) and Gavanta (1980).

One topic that seems crucial is the nature of power in the region and its communities. Appalachia is a region where power is unequally divided. If workers are to function effectively in community and planning roles, they must be able to use the system of power that exists. Another consideration should be familiar with many of the current Appalachian issues such as land ownership, the farm crisis and energy development. Planners and organizers need to understand all sides of these critical issues.

It is clear, then, that planners and organizers must have a sensitivity to Appalachia in order to work effectively. In addition, they need practice skills that are in keeping with the revised model. Practice Skills and Practice Theories: Traditional social work education can provide many skills that are useful in the present context. Community organization/social planning students are taught theories of practice that stress participation (Ross, 1955; Burke, 1979), empowerment (Grosser, 1965; Rubin and Rubin, 1986; Burghart, 1982) and the importance of self help. Many of the skills that are taught in traditional practice courses, such as community analysis, grassroots fund raising, committee management, door-to-door organizing, etc. are also useful within this context. Some additional training is needed, however.

While some of the more traditional theories may work in the present context, there are newer models that seem more appropriate. Korten (1980) proposes a model of community practice that is built on social learning theory. This model stresses planning with the people and the inclusion of knowledge acquisition processes through the involvement of social scientists. While the model was developed for use in the third world, it seems particularly well adapted to the present situation. Gran (1983) proposes a similar theory based on somewhat different assumptions.

Traditional practice skills must be augmented by newer skills for a enhanced practice base. Future practitioners will need broader skills in working with the economic system. These might include traditional economic development skills such as Benefit-Cost Analysis, economic base analysis, and the use of regional economic planning tools. They must understand what is involved in financing new community ventures and what types of considerations will influence their feasibility. This type of content is rarely taught within social work programs.

Skills in dealing with the political system are also important. These might include political analysis, lobbying, coalition formulation, etc. for a broad range of issues (Haynes and Mickelson, 1986). While some social workers do receive some content on political skills, the emphasis is largely sectorial in approach.

Practitioners will also need enhanced skills in terms of evaluating the consequences of development. Social impact analysis is important in evaluating the outcomes of development on human institutions. Some training in social impact analysis should be provided for practitioners within their research and planning courses. Participatory research is also important and provides an effective means of linking knowledge building with action.

These skills, coupled with the traditional skills that are already taught, can provide the Appalachian development practitioner with the background to practice effectively in the alternative development model. While most of the content can be taught within existing courses, it would probably be beneficial to have separate course work on the region and its development. A policy

course dealing with the interaction between social welfare policies and Appalachian development policies could prove useful. Practice courses could be augmented with additional content. These skills courses provide training that can be directly applied through field education. Field Education: Social work education includes a considerable field education component. This allows students to practice the skills that they have learned in the classroom. Faculty will have to make diligent efforts to identify field agencies that are involved in the appropriate forms of practice. Considerable care must be taken to insure that the agencies selected share the value and skill orientations that are being promoted. Since accreditation requirements specify a field supervisor with an MSW, and many alternative programs do not employ one, it may be necessary for the school to make up part of the supervision.

This proposed design would allow social work education to prepare development practitioners who could respond effectively to the problems of Appalachia. It represents generally minor devisions from the existing structure of social work education and could, therefore, be easily implemented.

Conclusions:

The social work profession has had a long standing concern for the problems of the poor, the oppressed and the disenfranchised. The profession has been involved with the problems of Appalachia for a long time, and many practitioners have been successful in improving the lives of individuals and communities throughout the region.

The Appalachian region continues to suffer from many of its traditional problems and from a number of new problems, such as capital flight. New efforts must be made to develop the region in a manner that will provide every man, women and child within the region with a decent standard of living and the opportunity to realize his or her potential. If social work is to contribute to this effort, it must change some of the assumptions that it makes about development theory and development practice.

Social Workers have been trained to plan and organize within the context of a development theory that create barriers to a bright and fulfilling future for Appalachia and her people. This theory discourages the adequate funding of social programs and robs social workers of the opportunity to improve the lives of their clients in a significant manner. Applied to Appalachian development, the theory has created a programs that can have unfortunate side effects.

Movement to a new approach to development could open the doors for both a more appropriate development and a more effective social work. Bringing this new theory in is partially a task for social work education. By building a social work education that prepares practitioners to function within a new developmental framework, social work could make a major contribution to the future of Appalachia.

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